

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the paragraph on page 5, lines 14 and 15 as follows:

Figure ~~[[4]]~~ 4A is a top plan view illustrating an integrated circuit constructed in accordance with another embodiment of the present invention;

On page 5, between lines 15 and 16, please insert the following paragraph:

Figure 4B is a top plan view illustrating an integrated circuit constructed in accordance with yet another embodiment of the present invention;

Please amend the paragraph on page 8, lines 6 through 15 as follows:

In yet another embodiment, the alignment tab 210 is removably coupled with the lead frame 200. A separation line 240 is disposed between the lead frame 200 and the alignment tab 210. The separation line 240 could be a perforated line (e.g., see perforated line 451 of Figure 4B), a fold line, or other types of structure or lines of weakness which permit removal of the alignment tab 210 from the lead frame 200. A technician can then remove the alignment tab by folding the alignment tab 210 over the separation line 240. The alignment tab 210 is folded, repeatedly, if necessary, over the separation line 240 until the alignment tab 210 is severed or broken away from the lead frame 200. A cutting device could be used to remove the alignment tab 210 from the lead frame 200. A fixture for holding the cutting device could also be used to facilitate removal of the alignment tab 210.

Please amend the paragraph bridging pages 8 and 9 as follows:

Figure 3 illustrates another embodiment of the alignment feature for a vertical surface mount package (VSMP). A conductive apparatus has a first side 310, a second side 320, and a third side 330. In one embodiment, the conductive apparatus comprises a lead frame 300. A

plurality of conductors 340 extends from the third side 330. The first side 310 and the second side 320 each have at least one alignment cut out 350 therein. Alternatively, the alignment cut out 350 could be provided on a single side of the lead frame 300. The lead frame 300 in one embodiment has four alignment cut outs 350. The lead frame 300, alternatively, could have two or more alignment cut outs 350. The alignment cut out 350 is sized large enough that the plastic of the packaging process, including mold flash, will not significantly overlap the alignment cut out 350. In one embodiment, the alignment cut out 350 is a half circle having a radius of .030 inches and positioned .010 inches away from either the first side 310 or the second side 320. Alternatively, the alignment cut out 350 could have other shapes and sizes such as holes, slots, etc. and yet still be considered within the scope of the present invention. In yet another embodiment, the alignment feature could be a protuberance formed on one of the sides of the lead frame 300 (such as protuberance 450' shown in Figure 4B). It is desirable that the position of the alignment feature is such that the features do not interfere with mold gates and vents, yet such that package performance and internal lead positioning is acceptable.

Please amend the paragraph on page 9 at lines 5 through 16 as follows:

~~Figure 4 illustrates another embodiment~~ Figures 4A and 4B illustrate additional embodiments of the present invention. A VSMP integrated circuit 400 is provided with a lead frame 420 having alignment features 410. The lead frame 420 has leads 430 and an alignment portion 422. The alignment portion 422 includes a tie bar 424 and also other parts of the lead frame 420 which provide internal support to the integrated circuit package. However, the alignment portion 422 does not include outer rails (not shown) or an outer frame (not shown) which are used during the encapsulation process. The lead frame 420 ~~has~~ may include alignment cut outs 450 (Figure 4A) or alignment protuberances 450' (Figure 4B) integral therewith, disposed within the alignment portion 422. The alignment cut outs 450 and protuberances 450' are sized large enough such that mold flash from encapsulation, discussed below, will not interfere with nor fill in the alignment cut out 450. In one embodiment, the alignment cut out 450 has a semi-circular shape. Alternatively, other shapes could be used for

the alignment cut out 450. As previously noted, in one embodiment, the protuberances 450' may be removable along a perforation 451 or other line of weakness if so desired.